Loss of life and property due to severe cold conditions

1316. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the loss of life and property,other than the damage caused to crops, suffered by the Northern States, State-wise, due to severe cold conditions during the winter of 2007-08; and

(b) the assistance rendered by the Centre from the Disaster Management Fund to each State for assistance to those who suffered loss of the life and property with the rate of such assistance for lives lost and the property (homes etc.) damaged?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI): (a) and (b) Financial assistance to States is provided from the Scheme of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) in the wake of notified natural calamities *viz.* cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm landslides, avalanche, cloud burst and pest attack. Natural calamities in the wake of which assistance is provided to the States are notified based on the recommendations of successive Finance Commissions. The Twelfth Finance Commission has considered requests for inclusion of more calamities including "cold wave" but have not recommended for their inclusion in the list of notified natural calamities. In view of this, this Ministry does not maintain information on damage caused due to severe cold conditions.

There is no fund called "Disaster Management Fund" operated by the Government of India. The State Governments are required to provide assistance to the people affected by notified natural calamities from the funds available in their CRF account in accordance with the approved items and norms.

However, in the event of natural calamities, which are not covered under the Schemes of CRF/NCCF, the concerned State Government may provide assistance to the affected people from its own resources.

Rampage at recruitment centre for Assam Rifles in Agra

1317. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons who were present at the recruitment centre for Assam Rifles in Agra that resulted in rampage and confusion;

(b) whether the matter has been inquired into to fix responsibility for creating this situation; and

(c) if so, the finding thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Approximately 80,000.

(b) and (c) The Court of Enquiry ordered into the incident has found that all the procedures laid down for the conduct of recruitment rally were followed in totality. The unfortunate

incident occurred because of the gathering of an extremely large number of candidates and inadequacy of crowd control measures, lack of publicity regarding change of venue and a rumor regarding cencellation of the rally. The Assam Rifles have accordingly modified the procedure to prevent any such incident in future.

Bangladeshis involved in naxalite violence

†1318. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made a survey of Bangladeshis involved in naxalite violence;

(b) whether they have been arrested;

(c) if so, the State-wise details thereof; and

(d) if not, by when the above mentioned survey would be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) As per information available, there is no involvement of Bangladeshi migrants in the naxalite activities.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Visa policy for chinese pilgrims and tourists

1319. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the visa policy for Chinese pilgrims and tourists;

(b) whether visa policy is likely to be simplified for those who want to visit India for a very short duration; and

(c) the time it takes for tourists to obtain visa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Tourist visa is granted to Chinese Nationals for visiting this country for a period of three months with a single entry facility, on presentation of a confirmed return air-ticket and proof of his/her having sufficient finances to cover all expenditure in India. There is also provision to grant multiple entry visa to the applicant if his/her itinerary and the air ticket issued to him/her specifically indicates this requirement. The tourist visa shall be valid for entry into India from its date of issue. The tourist visa may also be extended by Ministry of Home Affairs, on application by the tourist in person, upto a period of 3 months provided the total duration of the stay in India does not exceed 6 months. There is no separate category of visa for pilgrims.

(b) The Government has no proposal, at present, to simplify the visa policy for very short duration stay in India.

(c) Visas to Chinese tourists are generally issued in 3 working days.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.